

August 15, 2012

Honorable Senators  
Michigan Senate Judiciary Committee  
410 Farnum Building.  
P.O. Box 30036  
Lansing, MI 48909

As a veteran of the United States Marine Corps and retired Detroit Police Officer I'm here to express my opposition to House Bills 4834, 4851, 4853, 4856 (HB's 4834,4851,4853,4856) which would drastically alter the Michigan Medical Marihuana Act 2008. The proposed legislation does nothing to improve the Michigan Medical Marihuana Act 2008, it does however place more burden on patients and caregivers to comply with the law.

Michigan voters overwhelmingly voted in favor of protecting our sick and disabled residents who use marijuana as a medication. The Michigan Medical Marihuana Act 2008 is keeping over one hundred thousand (100,000) Michigan residents from having to deal with the illegal market. A market where our sick and disabled are subjected to arrest, rip-offs, exploitation and unnecessary stress.

Among those protected are many veterans who are returning from combat tours in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Many have suffered horrific injuries and use medical marijuana to improve their quality of life and alleviate their pain. The proposed House Bills (HB 4834, 4851, 4853, 4856) have the potential to place our veterans directly back in the line of fire.

Many of us have paid dearly for our service to our country. We have been battered, broken and disfigured while doing our "duty". While most Americans slept we patrolled, while the children played we kept an eye on them, we did our best to keep everyone safe. As a servant of our great country I'm asking you to please vote no House Bills 4834, 4851, 4853, 4856.

My opposition to each bill is as follows:

House Bill 4834 - This bill would allow local and state officials/officers access to the marijuana registry database via the Law Enforcement Information Network (LEIN). The unfettered access to a patients medical information by any official or officer without a warrant is a recipe for abuse. Among those with access to the LEIN system are mall and hospital security guards. Throughout the last decade there have been numerous cases of law enforcement abusing the LEIN system. Not only does proposed House Bill 4834 allow for abuse it also allows for fishing expeditions by unethical officials, police officers, mall and hospital security guards. Michigan's medical marijuana patients deserve a semblance of medical confidentiality.

House Bill 4851 - This bill would again place more restrictions and hardships on patients who do not live in a major metropolitan area with full time clinics that service medical marijuana patients. Many patients do not have the luxury of insurance and a primary care physician, thus making it more difficult to get a doctors recommendation for medical marijuana here in the State of Michigan.

House Bill 4851 - Also limits how and with who a patient can transport live marijuana plants. The proposed legislation restricts the transporting of live plants to a patient and caregiver only, this is not realistic. Many patients do not have a caregiver and often-times have difficulty driving. Should a patient need a spouse or loved one to drive for them it would be a crime to pick up medical marijuana plants. No-one should be a criminal for helping a loved-one follow the law.

House Bill 4853 - This bill is redundant, as it already a felony to sell medical marijuana to someone without a valid Michigan Medical Marijuana card.

House Bill 4856 - The proposed legislation places another burden on patients and caregivers. Requiring patients and caregivers to lock up their medication for transportation as if it were a firearm is both unnecessary and mean-spirited. Far more dangerous drugs do not require their containment in a sealed locked vessel when being transported. House Bill 4856 would only ensure more patients and caregivers become entangled in the legal system. That is something that patients, caregivers and the State of Michigan cannot afford. There is also a problem with storing medical marijuana in the truck of a hot vehicle, the heat degrades the quality of the medication.

Respectfully,

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